

Financial Deteriorated Indicators in “The Domestic Crusaders” by Wajahat Ali

Aneesa Iftikhar¹

Abstract

This research is based on the economic crisis in Wajahat Ali's "The Domestic Crusaders" suffered by women through a Marxist feminist lens. Marx propounded the theory with his friend Fredrick Angels. Marxist feminism critiques capitalism as a system that exploits labor alienates people, and debases freedom. It emphasizes that women cannot achieve empowerment within capitalism and rejects treating women as separate groups. The focus of this research is to highlight the crisis under the influence of capitalism controlled by men. Wajahat Ali has presented the miserable plight of the Muslim American family under the influence of domestic colonization, acculturation, and supremacy. The results of this research show that the intergenerational gap between these three generations leads them towards crisis, fewer jobs and inflation is the other reason for the crisis. The major practice-restricted policies by homeland security have left no space among the family members with these unbearable crises. As a whole, this play is the depiction of a Muslim American family who has a jumbled experience under the squeeze of not only the economic snatchers but dealt with crisis also.

Keywords: Marxist capitalism, Economic Crisis, Women exploitation, The Domestic Crusaders

Introduction

Famous author, playwright, and former New York Times Magazine columnist Wajahat Ali has received honors and accolades for his work. He was born in the Bay area in "San Francisco" and is the son of Muslim immigrants from Pakistan who immigrated as children. Through the articles, interviews, and stories he wrote for The New York Times, The Atlantic, The Washington Post, The Guardian, and the New York Review of Books, Wajahat Ali became well-known among the general

¹ Public Sector Educator. Lahore – Punjab, Pakistan

public during his time as a student. Ali advocated for women across a variety of venues and institutions, including Google, Walmart, Princeton University, the United Nations, and Pakistani restaurants. Indians from Chandni to New York (The Levin Agency).

The subject of "The Domestic Crusaders" is a contemporary Muslim Pakistani-American family with six diverse and individual individuals that gather at the family home to commemorate the youngest child's twenty-first birthday. With 9/11 as a backdrop and Muslim Americans being used as scapegoats, tensions, economic hardship, and sparks fly between the three generations, culminating in a fierce family fight as each 'crusader' fights to assert and impose their individual voices and opinions while still attempting to maintain and understand the unifying thread that makes them all members of the same family.

The racial, religious, and cultural problems are portrayed in "The Domestic Crusaders" (Saddam Ul Islam, 2022) through the eyes of a Pakistani-Muslim American family. It is the best literary textual story ever written because it uses humor and irony to address serious themes. The fact that Wajahat utilized the terms "Domestic" rather than "Americans" and "crusaders" rather than "invaders" is a testament to his artistic prowess. Wajahat's deepest love and affection for Americans are expressed in this title choice.

The themes of the economic crisis and the devaluation of values have been taken into consideration in order to identify the root causes of the social conflict in the drama. Only a few carefully chosen theoretical notions associated with socioeconomic crises have been addressed, as opposed to all aspects of theorists and cultural theories. Instead of broader postcolonial nations, this study has concentrated on Muslims who live in America.

The three generations that make up the family are the older generation, the parents, and the younger generation. While the older generation maintains its cultural beliefs, the younger generation, which has adopted Western society only partially and partially, rejected parental tradition, finds itself caught between the two cultural systems. They have cultivated a fresh sense of pattern that draws elements from both Western civilization and their parents' culture. They promote a hybrid identity as a result, which mixes the two cultural identities with the economic crises and strengthens the first. In Wajahat's play "The Domestic Crusaders" (2005), socioeconomic difficulties are caused by a number of prevailing variables, which are the focus of this study. This is a comedic drama with intelligent and deep themes.

The future of their children and social freedom in the U.S. are two separate concerns for parents.

Economic Crisis

The social and economic well-being of the respective communities is effectively impacted by the financial and economic crises. The prior financial situation serves as an illustration of how social well-being indices have declined over the long and short terms. According to an analysis of the financial crises in East Asian nations like Thailand, Korea, Argentina (1995), Venezuela (1994), and Argentina (1995), the growing cost of products, decreased access to commodities, fewer jobs, and loss of income, unpleasant economic conditions, and declining asset values present a virtual financial crisis.

Young, elderly, and sick women are among the most vulnerable groups affected by these financial and economic crises. Social exclusion and the inequality of the income-disparity situation are linked to the crisis, which harms societal cohesiveness. The fundamental causes of the severe financial crisis in society include labour market channels, financial market channels, public coping mechanisms, and individual coping mechanisms (Robe and Piera, 2013). More social and macroeconomic crises is brought on by migration of the reproductive age groups, constrained social services, and poor health and education indicators. (World Bank, 2001).

Multipronged socio-economic crises demand such changes:

- Impacts social structure or a system's ability to persist;
- Contributes to losses in matters of security, politics, society, and the environment.
- Demand significantly more managerial work, which is challenging and important for the social organization. Anthropology offers creative insight in times of crisis (Viscously 2017, 12). (Berger and Mann 195, Gluck 1972) make suggestions for the definitions of crisis and this idea of a moral crisis.
- Because it provides a pre-planning structure for the resolution, anthropological contributions are very helpful in maintaining the understanding of the situation. The critical framework for the new immigrant generations and the societal transformation was made abundantly obvious by the anthropological investigation.

The writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels created a new continent of thought about social life. Marx demonstrated how capital was able to grow through the exploitation of labor. With the rise of industrial capitalism at the beginning of the 19th century, workers, with no other property except their own power to work, had to resign themselves to working for capitalists. However, when the exhausted workers went back home from the factories and the fields, they had to resuscitate themselves with their meager pay packets through unpaid reproductive labor at home.

In the *German Ideology* (1845-6), Marx and Engels described the misperception of workers' relations to reproduction. "The production of life, both of one's own in labor and of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a double relationship: on the one hand as a natural, on the other as a social relationship" (Marx and Engels 1964, 41). Reproductive labor had social forms that organized it, such as marriage and the family; but the labor itself was seen as biological. Women who performed this labor were also naturalized, as biological beings unable to effect changes in these social orders.

Dimensions of the Play

"The Domestic Crusaders" is a versatile and artistic play and the creation of Wajahat Ali 's versatile art. Wajahat Ali is a Muslim American playwright who has portrayed the explicit picture of a Pakistani Muslim American family accurately which immigrated to the United States of America.

The appearance of Kulsoom

Kulsoom, mother of three family kids, with greying hair and wrinkles around her eyes, is in her mid-fifties wearing the traditional female shalwar kameez, presenting a glimpse of her acculturation mode, she is tied chiefly to her cultural values throughout the scene of the play, she is facing the pressure of a multipronged financial crisis; that's why she looks tiresome, rough and not up to the mark as living in America. She is also facing the whole pressure of family and immigration. The scarf around the neck. Wearing traditional female shalwar kameez. ("The Domestic Crusaders", p. 5)

Even living in America, though they have narrowed down to a corner in this community, mentally, Kulsoom is enthusiastic with positive about becoming a grandmother after their elder son's wedding. Here Kulsoom is advising her son on an awesome proposal, “.... Find one nice girl, oh badmash (bastard)...” (“The Domestic Crusaders”, p. 8)

The researcher's view is valid to mention, the lifestyle of first society's people and living in less reluctant societies will be part of each other in happiness and in satisfaction. (Clark 2003, Frey and Layard 2005, Warr 2007), “... You find one that has strong family ties and traditions.... (“The Domestic Crusaders”, p. 9)

Kulsoom is full of cultural approaches and she demands a strong and culturally attached wife of her elder son Salahuddin because these ties and traditions are of great importance in the eyes of Kulsoom. Even living in America, she is affiliated with her traditions for the real charm of Life. As Kulsoom is under the power of acculturation, Salahuddin is also under the thoughts of acculturation pattern, and he assures his mother of the selection of a nice, sober, and cultured wife.

Fatima's Personality

As Fatima is better aware of the temporariness of their stay in America furthermore, she is also well aware of the dealing of Americans regarding these Muslims. That is a vital reason she argues that her stay is a short stay just on weekends, while others are staying here permanently, “.... This is your house. I only come on the weekends...” (“The Domestic Crusaders”, p. 5).

Hybridity is a global condition that is brought on by wars, enslavement, invasions intermarriages, the mingling of two civilizations, and commerce. (keychain 198, Bhabha 19, Grayed, 2005). These logical and witty comments she exchanges to her mom, pointing towards Sunday stay. She realizes to her mom that as she is living here permanently, then she should not spare the work and chores for her. In her further conversation with Kulsoom, Fatima assures her mother about her cooked food, but she does not think of cooking any dish.

She neither wishes nor thinks of doing this work in the future. Fatima does not care about her brothers and her mother's will for cooking. The mother wants to sustain their cultural tradition of cooking, but the daughter is trying to refrain from this responsibility. The biggest effect is due to assimilation. Fatima sticks to her mongrel

approach and does not go to indulge in such domestic chores. With these arguments, Fatima's bold modern, and assimilated nature has been vivid explicitly.

Kulsoom and Fatima remain busy in domestic talks; after that, Kulsoom comes to some valid points for her daughter's future being an Eastern girl: shy, obedient, and helping hand. In terms of food and serving to husband, Kulsoom is trying her best attempt to motivate her bachelor daughter to prepare good food, with good manners to serve her husband, "... Treating your husband with respect does not make you a slave. In addition, he will never chase after another woman ("The Domestic Crusaders", p. 6). This is a lesson from Mother which Marx Marxist defined a class of men in society under capitalism and describes how they control the means and women to produce more goods and make them dominated ("Marxist and Socialist Feminisms, 2020).

Then she will attain a good reputation in the eyes of her husband and in-laws, then that girl will achieve mental solace and peace from her husband's side Khulsoom further asserts that her husband will not mind the matter if she demands less or greater futures pounds at any time. By learning these tricks, she will be the apple of her husband's eye. Then the husband will show loyalty to his wife. This concern shows Khulsoom's compulsive nature for her existence and respect.

Researchers' view of the mingling of two cultures within one civilization identifies hybridity with an unexpected interaction (Gilbert, Lo 1997). According to Fatima's view, those aunties are gossipy, and squads have lost purpose or without any mission in front of them. However, Kulsoom will not forgive her for these witty comments; she interrupts with such words: "... Life does not revolve around marriage. Tell that to your gossipy aunty squad..." as she is worried about the identity in abroad under economic crisis. ("The Domestic Crusaders", p. 7). so, she complains about the proposal of her daughter due to the effects of linear assimilation.

Fatima gives the title of obtuse to her mom and other people who are invading these affairs. For her, marriage and marriage data is just a stupid activity because her mission is greater than indulging in these domestic and conjugal affairs to serve men only. With all these contradictory remarks, thoughts are different between them, about the different perspectives of contradictions. Under capitalism, Engels argued, "(h)ousehold management lost its public character. It no longer concerned society. It became a private service: the wife became head servant, excluded from all

participation in social production” (Engels, 1942, 65). In particular, Rosa Luxemburg argued that imperialism relied upon reproduction to more intensively exploit workers, new markets, and natural resources (Luxemburg, 1951).

Fatima is in favor of Ghafur, she argues that it is better to train the people for Christianity because these Christians are decent and innocent people will not burst the bomb for another innocent lives. With a sudden jerk, Fatima also said that these people might conveniently change into devils and most of us behave like that. Fatima is regretful for Muslims of this converting behavior under the absolute pressure of economic concerns and social crisis; all the family members participate in minor, more significant, vital, or trivial activities and discussions. Elisabeth Armstrong said that, Women’s subordination was neither biologically natural nor God-given; instead, the class relations of capitalism enforced the gender hierarchies that anchored women’s oppression. Marxist feminists viewed this patriarchal family as integral to capitalism, and thus a site of oppression that must be destroyed. (2020)

Valueless Women

Our men are in such a rush to become white and Amreekan ...and our own precious Jewels our women. (“The Domestic Crusaders”, p. 29)

Hakim is pointing out the negligence and carefree nature of Muslim males, because, materially and socially they have been absorbed, in their affairs to become like white people. They also want to be like Americans by following the Americanization pattern. Like Khulsoom Salman and Fatima Hakim Daada lamenting that, we are Muslims, we have been far away from our cultural traditions and ties, and we have forgotten our precious Jewels and treasure women.

We have neglected them. For Hakim, Daada is a great pinching thing, that the Muslim Jewel-like women are valueless, while the other Goree beyond women is the top priority of these Muslim men. Fatima interrupts and says that our condition among those men is not more than a commodity in a selling market. As Hakim Daada has given the title of Jewel to these women as more precious, Fatima is now using the tag of the commodity in the concern of the Jewel word.

The word ‘Lady’ is used for the adult female in different contexts and reflects politeness for a stranger female. She also defines that when a compound form is

used for a woman 'Crazy Lady', it indicates that she is lower than men. The research reveals that the writer uses negative words and sentences to represent women and men, using body parts to describe women, while men are described as either positive or negative. The writer also employs generic nouns, gender derogation, and readymade phrases to describe gender discrimination. The writer portrays male characters as opposite to females, presenting them as pleasure seekers, terrorists, and extremists, while females are portrayed as exaggerators, seducers, jealous, envious, and problem-seekers. The final question questions the role of Khulsoom, a female character, in berating other female characters and Western women, such as Fatima, who is not married yet. Salman, a male character, misbehaves with his wife, comparing Fatima to an old witch and implying that they never seem to die. (A Feminist Stylistic Analysis of 'The Domestic Crusaders' by Wajahat Ali, 2022).

Preparing lamb biryani by Khulsoom for Ghafur's birthday celebration has become a headache for all the family members. Especially as lamb is related to cultural values and tastes, but here they refused this now; changes in food taste have become a degrading factor for their cultural values. Now Salman demands chicken biryani just out of concern for taste change, but it is also the effect of assimilation motivational pattern and rejection of an alteration.

Conclusion

After completing the data analysis process in this research, here comes the crucial step to conclude the whole research regarding the selected topic. The primary factors, which are creating an economic crisis for these non-natives, especially women, have been highlighted from different perspectives in "The Domestic Crusaders". The hybrid identity of Fatima and the family has fragmented and messed up situations are the basic responsible factors for these members' downfall in the non-native country with the dominated environment and economic disturbances. While Khulsoom's appearance, marriage prospects, and typical language make a gulf between mother and daughter which leads them toward a social crisis.

Unemployment and inflation are the leading factors for these characters' economic crises. Khulsoom is not doing any job; she stays at home with very little interaction with the public, her typical lifestyle hurt the entire family, along with Salman's mindset. (Graham, Mindsetolan, Et al). Fatima has the wish to become a lawyer, but

up until now, she has faced the trouble of boundaries, restrictions, and unemployment, which leads the family towards an economic crisis.

A Challenge of IMBES (Integrated Border Management System) and FOBS (Fresh of The Boats) along with the Challenge of Extremists and Anti smites at Home for Fatima played a very vital and leading role in the economic crisis of this Muslim family. Because they remain deprived of all such luxuries that the white men enjoyed just due to the hurdles of the socio-economic crisis. Then they demanded some change in their lives (Venetta 2003).

Fatima's extrovert personality in comparison to Khulsoom's introvert personality leads to circumstances that degrade their social and cultural values. She becomes a renowned figure in her concern to degrade cultural values by contradicting her mother's typical views with (F.O.B.S) concern.

References

Ali, Wajahat (2011). "The Domestic Crusaders". 'San Francisco' McSweeney: 160-178.

Ali, Wajahat (2022). "Go back to where you came from and other helpful recommendations on how to become", American: WW Norton & Company

Armstrong, Elisabeth (2020). "Marxist and Socialist Feminism", Study of Women and Gender: Faculty Publications, Smith College, Northampton.

Gutiérrez, Banegas, Ana, et al. (2022). "Factors of job satisfaction during an economic crisis". A systematic review. Visión de futuro 26 (2), 22-35.

Ghazanfer, Shaista (2022). "A Feminist Stylistic Analysis of The Domestic Crusaders by Wajahat Ali", FAST.

Katsela, Konstantina (2014). "The impact of the Economic Crisis on Human Behavior and Labor Market a Minor Field Study."

Sami, Mahjabeen (2020). "Ambivalence in How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia"-A' novel by Mohsin Hamid." Competitive Social Science Research Journal, 1 (1), 29-37.

Stephano, Di. Christine (2014). "Marxist Feminism" Wiley Online Library. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/9781118474396.wbepto653>

Sapountzaki, Kalliopi (2019). "The Interplay between Socio-economic Crisis and Disaster risks: Examples from the Developed and Developing World." Paper to GAR.

Senzai, Farid, & Hatem Bazian (2013). "The Bay Area Muslim Study: Establishing Identity and Community." Washington DC Institute for Social Policy and Understanding.

Ul, Islam, Saddam, et al (2022). "Interpreting Intergenerational Conflict in Wajahat Ali's The Domestic Crusaders." Journal of Positive School Psychology, 6.8, 6422- 6434.